

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows, a marked up set is appended hereto to show changes.

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cont.*
1. (Amended) An electric spindle motor, comprising:

a base plate;

a rotatable assembly including a rotatable sleeve extending substantially perpendicular from said base plate along a rotational axis, wherein said rotatable assembly is supported by said base plate;

a stationary shaft securely coupled to said base plate, and extending within said sleeve along said rotational axis and spaced therefrom to define a first clearance gap;

a liquid situated within said first clearance gap for providing at least radial stiffness for said rotatable sleeve;

a thrust plate securely coupled to said base plate;

a thrust bearing securely coupled to said rotating assembly, wherein said thrust bearing is shaped complementary with said thrust plate and spaced apart therefrom to form a second clearance gap;

a gas fluid situated within said second clearance gap for providing at least axial stiffness for said rotatable assembly;

a stator for causing the rotation of said rotatable assembly;

a magnetic device operated by an electrical current for moving said rotatable assembly away from said base plate substantially along said rotational axis so that said rotatable assembly is less supported by said base plate during rotation of said rotating assembly, and

a magnetic preloading means including a permanent magnet for preventing free movement of said rotatable assembly when said current is not supplied to said magnetic device.

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amended

2. (Amended) The electric spindle motor of claim 1, wherein said magnetic device comprises a stator lamination with coil securely coupled to said base plate and a magnetic plate securely coupled to said rotatable assembly, and said magnetic preloading means permanent magnet is mounted to said magnetic plate.

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9. (Amended) An electric spindle motor, comprising:

- a base plate;
- a sleeve extending substantially perpendicular from said base plate along a rotational axis;
- a shaft extending within said sleeve along said rotational axis and spaced therefrom to define a clearance gap;
- a liquid fluid situated with said clearance gap for providing at least radial stiffness for said sleeve;
- at least one magnetic seal to reduce leaking of said liquid fluid from said clearance gap;
- a rotatable assembly supported by said base plate;
- a magnetic device operable on the supply of electrical current for moving said rotatable assembly away from said base plate substantially along said rotational axis so that said rotating assembly is less supported by said base plate during rotation of said rotating assembly; and
- a permanent magnet preloading means for magnetically preloading said rotatable assembly relative said base plate so as to prevent free movement of said rotating sub-assembly relative said base plate when said magnetic device is not operating.

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13. (Amended) The electric spindle motor of claim 12, wherein said magnetic device comprises a stator lamination with coil securely coupled to said base plate and a magnetic plate securely coupled to said rotatable assembly; and said permanent magnet preloading means includes a permanent magnet mounted to said magnetic plate.

16. (Amended) An electric spindle motor, comprising;

a base;

a rotatable member supported by said base and extending therefrom along a rotational axis;

a magnetic device operable by an electric current for moving said rotating member away from said base substantially along said rotational axis so that said rotatable member is less supported by said base during rotation of said rotatable member; and

a permanent magnet preloading means for magnetically preloading said rotatable member relative said base to prevent free movement of said rotatable member relative said base when said magnetic device is not operable by an electric current.

19. (Amended) The electric spindle motor of claim 16, further including at least one magnetic seal in a clearance gap between a sleeve on said rotatable member and a shaft on said base.

23. (Amended) The electrical spindle motor of claim 19, where said magnetic seal provides an electrical path for discharging static charges from a surface of disc disposed on said rotatable assembly.

Please cancel claims 11 and 12 without prejudice to applicant's continued prosecution of the retained and added claims.

Please add the following additional claim.

24. An electric spindle motor, comprising:

a base plate;

a rotatable assembly supported by said base plate;

a first magnetic means including a stator, coil and magnet operated by a control circuit for supplying electrical current to said coil for generating an axial force to separate the rotatable assembly of the spindle motor from the base plate before the rotatable assembly rotates